WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A network termination unit, comprising:

    a) a port operable to receive content signals;

    b) a demodulator operable to demodulate the content signals into demodulated content signals;

    c) a decoder operable to decode the demodulated content signals into display signals; and

    d) a module operable to detect use patterns of a user viewing display signals on a viewing device and to transmit the use patterns as use pattern packets.

2. The network termination unit of claim 1, wherein the network termination unit further comprises a set-top box.

3. The network termination unit of claim 1, wherein the network termination unit further comprises a cable modem.

4. The network termination unit of claim 1, wherein the viewing device further comprises a television.

5. The network termination unit of claim 1, wherein the viewing device further comprises a computing device.

6. The network termination unit of claim 1, wherein the use pattern packets are identified as such using a content discovery protocol.

7. The network termination unit of claim 1, wherein the decoder is also operable to decode the demodulated content signals into command and control signals.

8. The network termination unit of claim 1, wherein the module is also operable to detect services available information.

9. A content analyzer, comprising:

    a) a port operable to receive use pattern packets from a network termination unit;

    b) a decoder operable to decode the use pattern packets into data;

c) a processor operable to:

    i)   analyze the data to derive viewing information; and

    ii) characterize the network termination unit by that viewing information.

10. The content analyzer of claim 9, wherein the content analyzer resides at the distribution

     hub.

11. The content analyzer of claim 9, wherein the content analyzer resides at the head end.

12. The content analyzer of claim 9, wherein the decoder decodes the use pattern packets in

     accordance with a content discovery protocol.

13. The content analyzer of claim 9, wherein the processor is also operable to monitor

     services available information.

14. The content analyzer of claim 9, wherein the processor is operable to use the

     characterization of the network termination unit to target video content to that network

     termination unit.

15. A method of transmitting use patterns, the method comprising:

    a) tracking use patterns of a viewing device, based upon selection of content on the

        viewing device;

    b) formatting data representative of the use patterns or services available information

        into network packets as payload data;

    c) setting a network packet header to identify the payload as use patterns, forming a use

        pattern packet; and

    d) transmitting the use pattern packet.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein setting a network packet header is done in accordance

     with a content discovery protocol.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein the method further comprises tracking services available

     information.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein the method further comprises tracking video content delivery to users.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the video content further comprises programs.

20. The method of claim 18, wherein the video content further comprises advertising.

5   21. The method of claim 15, wherein the use patterns or services available information of a viewing device further comprises use patterns or services available information of service extension offered on the viewing device.

22. A network termination unit, comprising:

    a) a means for receiving video content signals;

10   b) a means for demodulating the video content signals into demodulated video content signals;

    c) a means for decoding the demodulated video content signals into display signals;

    d) a means for displaying the display signals; and

    e) a means for detecting use patterns or services available information of a user viewing

15   display signals on the viewing device and to transmit the use patterns or services available information as use pattern packets.

23. The network termination unit of claim 22, wherein the network termination unit further comprises a cable set-top box.

24. The network termination unit of claim 22, wherein the network termination unit further

20   comprises a cable modem.

25. The network termination unit of claim 22, wherein the means for detecting use patterns or services available information is operable to detect delivery of video content.

26. A content analyzer, comprising:

    a) a means for receiving use pattern packets from a network termination unit;

25   b) a means for decoding the use pattern packets into data;

c) a processing means operable to:

 i) analyze the data to derive viewing information; and

 ii) characterize the network termination unit by that viewing information.

27. The content analyzer of claim 26, wherein the content analyzer resides at a distribution hub.

28. The content analyzer of claim 26, wherein the content analyzer resides at a head end.

29. The content analyzer of claim 26, wherein the processor is further operable to target the network termination unit by its characterization.

30. An article containing machine-readable code that, when executed, causes the machine to:

a) track use patterns or services available information of a viewing device, based upon selection of video content on the viewing device;

b) format data representative of the use patterns or services available information into network packets as payload data;

c) set a network packet header to identify the payload as use patterns, forming a use pattern packet; and

d) transmit the use pattern packet.

31. The article of claim 30, wherein the article contains machine-readable code that, when executed, further causes the machine to monitor status of delivery of video content.